

week, I talked about the need to have tougher child support enforcement, to demand that parents take responsibility for their own children and not let parents off the hook or make the taxpayers pick up the tab for their neglect. If all the child support in America that is owed was paid, we could move 800,000 families off the welfare roll.

I'm pleased that Members of the House in both parties responded to my position on tougher child support enforcement. They voted by 426 to 5 to adopt a provision from my welfare reform bill that calls upon States to deny driver's licenses and professional licenses to deadbeat parents, people who owe child support and can pay it but don't. The House has now adopted every major child support element in my welfare reform bill. If the Senate will follow suit, we'll mount the toughest crackdown on deadbeat parents ever and will help more children, too.

But we have to do more to promote responsible parenting. Other provisions of the House bill would actually make it harder for many people to get off and stay off welfare. And the bill doesn't really do anything to promote work; indeed, it removes any real responsibility for States to help people gain the training and skills they need to get and keep jobs. It even cuts child care for working people struggling to hold down jobs and stay off welfare.

I commend the Democrats in the House for voting unanimously for an alternative bill spon-

sored by Congressman Nathan Deal of Georgia because it was tougher on work requirements, better for children, and did more to promote responsible parenting. I'm looking forward to working with Republicans and Democrats to really end welfare as we know it, making sure people earn a paycheck, not a welfare check, that they move from dependence to independence.

I also want to caution the Members of the House to try to tone down the rhetoric. It got a little rough last week and a little too personal and partisan. After all, all Americans want to change the welfare system; no American wants to continue a system that doesn't promote work and responsible parenting.

In everything we do we must be working to expand the middle class, to shrink the under class, and to promote these values of family and work, community, and looking out for the future of our kids. I hope we'll be back in the Rose Garden while it's still spring to sign even more bills into law that help us to do those things. Guided by the values that have always kept us strong, we can work together to help all our people earn a fair shot at the American dream.

Thanks for listening.

NOTE: The President spoke at 10:06 a.m. from the Oval Office at the White House.

Interview With Tony Bruno and Chuck Wilson of ESPN Radio March 25, 1995

Mr. Bruno. As we continue on ESPN Radio, Tony Bruno and Chuck Wilson with you. And I've always wanted to do this, Chuck, when introducing a guest, but we've never had the opportunity so far.

Ladies and gentlemen, the President of the United States, Mr. Bill Clinton.

Mr. President, thanks for joining us on ESPN Radio. This is not a joke. People will think because I like to clown around that we're pulling a fast one on the American public, but we are not. And we appreciate you joining us.

The President. I'm glad to do it. And I'm glad to be in a conversation where the American

people think someone else is pulling a fast one on them instead of the President. [Laughter]

NCAA Basketball Tournament

Mr. Wilson. Mr. President, we have had an opportunity to see an outstanding NCAA tournament. I know you're a big basketball fan, and your Arkansas Razorbacks, they're still alive.

The President. They're an amazing team. You know, everybody they've played this year it seems has played their very best game against them, and in every game it seems they have a few minutes of mental lapse where they let the other team get back in. But they've got enormous heart. I'm really proud of them, just

to keep coming back. They never give up, and I respect that. I respect that in life, and I certainly respect it on the basketball court.

Mr. Wilson. They've kept you on the edge of your chair, haven't they? The one-point game with Texas Southern, 2 overtime games, 13 times this year they've had a game decided by 5 points or less, and they win 12 of the 13.

The President. It's amazing. They find a way to win. They keep getting themselves in trouble, but they find a way to win. Last night we had a watch party here at the White House, and we had a lot of folks from home there. And we had a cardiologist there—we were all glad he was there. We thought he was going to have to jumpstart half the crowd to get us through the end of the game. [Laughter]

Mr. Bruno. They also keep you up very late also because of these overtime games. Can't you control CBS and have them put them on earlier? [Laughter]

The President. No, I don't have any—you know, that's the first amendment; the President, more than anybody else in the country, has no control over the media.

Mr. Bruno. President Bill Clinton is joining us from the Oval Office.

Let's talk about—now the Arkansas Razorbacks are one more step—actually, they're one step away from the Final Four. You've got the Sunday game. Is this team going to all the way? I want the Presidential prediction here now.

The President. Well, I think they have the ability to do it and they have the heart to do it. They've got to find the right combinations and maintain their concentration. I think they tend to up their play. You know, the two best basketball games I saw all year were the two games they played against Kentucky. And one they won, and one they lost. So it's obvious that they have the talent and the heart to do it, and I think if they can really get to the end of the games mentally, I think they've got a good chance to make it.

I was—I must say I was very impressed with the game Virginia played against Kansas last night. They were exhausted with 7 or 8 minutes left to go. I didn't know if they could get through the end of the game, but they somehow found the strength and the reserve to hang in there and win that game. So they've got a hard game to get by Virginia before they get to the Final Four. But I do think they have a chance to win.

The Presidency

Mr. Wilson. President Clinton, frequently Presidents are accused of being out of touch with the people. They sit in the White House; they attend official functions. They don't get out with the regular people. You seemed to have really pushed very hard to be as normal as you can in the White House. Do you find it beneficial, even beyond the family aspects, to get out and to go to basketball games or a football game, that kind of thing?

The President. Oh, I do. I think it's beneficial whenever the President can be in more normal circumstances, for two reasons. First of all, it makes you remember that there's a real life beyond the White House and all the security apparatus that surrounds the President; it makes you feel better and kind of get back in touch with yourself. And secondly, it's important that the President see people in informal ways who are all kinds of citizens, that he relates to people without regard to their party or income or any other particular reason they might have to come to see the President in the White House. I think that's very important.

This is a wonderful opportunity. And it's important that the President be, to some extent, removed from the day-to-day things of life because you've got to keep looking for the long run. You've got to do a lot of things in this job that are unpopular because you believe them to be best for America in the long run. But still, the biggest danger is just being out of touch. So I try to fight it, and I enjoy trying to fight it.

Mr. Wilson. And it's tough to be normal in a sense because of all the security measures. You go to a game; it's not Bill Clinton going to the game, it's the President going to the game.

The President. Yes, and I—you know, I love to go to basketball games. I made one Georgetown game, my alma mater, and one George Washington game here in Washington this year. And I tried to do it in a way that would be as least disruptive as possible. I don't like to make other people wait on me to get out of a basketball arena. I don't like to make people wait in line while I'm getting in and getting seated. I really—I'm reluctant to go out to these events because I don't like to inconvenience other people. But it's certainly a great deal of fun when I get there.

Baseball Strike

Mr. Bruno. President Bill Clinton joining us from the Oval Office here on ESPN Radio, Tony Bruno and Chuck Wilson.

One of the things that we—none of us will be able to go to unless we want to go to replacement games is major league baseball. Mr. President, we all know the situation is now at a turning point. We would have liked a line-item veto a couple of weeks ago to eliminate some parties from the bargaining mix. [Laughter] Unfortunately, you weren't able to do that for us either.

The President. We're about to pass the line-item veto. We're going to get that done. I don't know if I can apply it to baseball negotiations. I think it only applies to budgets, but it's not a bad idea. It's not too late.

Mr. Bruno. Well, the American fans, almost are apathetic about this. We're a week away from opening day. The real games, obviously, aren't going to start, barring some miraculous development this coming week. What do you think is going to happen? Do you think that this thing will eventually be solved before the season is totally shot?

The President. Well, I still think there's a chance. Mr. Usery, the person I appointed to mediate this, is still working. And of course, there are some developments involving—in the courts—involving the NLRB decisions that could have an impact on this. But I have to say, I will say again, I think both the players and the owners have to be aware that ultimately this game depends upon the fans. And if the fans finally get sick of it and decide they'd rather do something else, that's not good for baseball. And in the end, that is the ultimate hazard, that if it becomes so painfully clear that it's no longer a sport and it's just a business, then the customers may decide to take their business elsewhere. And that's what I think they all have to be sensitive to. They're about to run out this string. They need to resolve this.

Mr. Wilson. The thing that is so frustrating is that this game is predicated so much on the history of the sport. And if we start the season with replacement ballplayers, it really puts a stain on the history of the game, doesn't it?

The President. Well, sure, it does. Just like the strike last year. We had a chance to break records that had stood for decades, both because we had some great hitters having great seasons

and, of course, because the expansion maybe spread the pitching a little thinner than the hitting. But for whatever reason, we were on the verge of having a shattering season in the best sense. And the American people were excited about it; they were into it. We had all kinds of people my age who hadn't thought about baseball in years that were back into it. And then, boom, all of a sudden there was the strike, and it was over.

So I think if you put that with a season of replacement players, I think there's going to be a lot of diminished enthusiasm. I think people will be more interested in their minor league teams, the teams in their own little leagues in their communities, than they are in major league baseball. It could become a community support again—sport again, almost the way soccer is, if they don't fix it.

Michael Jordan

Mr. Bruno. Mr. President, sooner or later baseball will be back; we all know that somehow, someday, will happen. Michael Jordan, though, returned recently now to the NBA, and Mike Tyson was just released from prison. So things aren't really all bad. We're seeing some of the big names in sports come back. Your thoughts on the return of Michael Jordan and Mike Tyson now back into the mainstream society.

The President. Well, I think Jordan has played very well, considering the pressure that's been on him and how long he's been out of basketball. You know, he doesn't quite have his shot back yet. But he's played very well, and I'm amazed that—I know he was training for baseball, but it's still—it's a different sport that requires different skills. I'm amazed at how well he's gotten back into the flow of the game. And he makes the Bulls a different team because he in effect makes all those other guys more potent weapons as well. So I think—I don't know how quickly they'll get it all worked out, but when they do they'll be humming again.

NCAA Basketball Tournament

Mr. Bruno. All right, Mr. President, before we let you go—and we appreciate your time this morning—we've got to get—we know you like Arkansas. We need the Final Four prediction from President Bill Clinton.

The President. I don't want to get into that. I'm devoted to Arkansas, and of course, the Oklahoma State coach, Eddie Sutton, is a very

close friend of mine. He coached at Arkansas for many years. And he has done a brilliant job, I think, in getting that team as far as it's gone. So I think—you know, I thought when we started the tournament that there were eight or nine teams that could win. Last year, when Arkansas won, I think, realistically, there were only about four teams that had a good chance to win. This year there really are eight or nine teams. And of course, now we're down to eight, and I think every one of them—I can see a scenario where they could come out on top.

UConn and UMass are both playing much better than they were along toward the end of the season. And UCLA has been stunning, and Kentucky, I don't think they've missed a shot since they beat Arkansas in overtime. So

I wouldn't hazard a prediction. I think any of these teams that are left can win.

Mr. Bruno. President Bill Clinton, taking the safe political route here on ESPN. Mr. President, we——

The President. As long as you know who I'm for, I don't have to predict who's going to win. [Laughter] I'm unambiguously for—[laughter].

Mr. Bruno. Mr. President, thank you so much for joining us here on ESPN Radio. We appreciate it.

The President. Thanks, Tony. Thanks, Chuck. Bye-bye.

NOTE: The interview began at 10:57 a.m. in the Oval Office at the White House and was embargoed for release until 6 p.m.

Remarks on the National Performance Review

March 27, 1995

Thank you very much. Mr. Vice President, Chairman Hundt, Secretary Babbitt, to Phil Lader and Dan Goldin and James Lee Witt, ladies and gentlemen: I'm glad to be here. I'd go nearly anywhere to get a check that size. [Laughter]

And I have now—and with all of you as my witnesses—the Vice President publicly thanking me for asking him to take over this reinventing Government effort. [Laughter] That is enough to wipe away all the private reservations that we have had to go through over the last year and a half. I want to thank him and Elaine Kamarck and all the staff of the reinventing Government effort because they have worked so very hard to give our country the Government that it deserves, the Government for the future, one that costs less and works better and reflects the real values of our people.

You know, in Washington, we're engaged today in a great debate over what the role of the Government here ought to be. Just about everybody has rejected the past view that there is a big one-size-fits-all Government that can solve all the big problems of America. Now the rage in Washington is to argue that the Government is the source of all of our problems and if just there simply weren't one, we'd have no problems. Sooner or later, the American people

will come to agree, and I think they are quickly coming to agree, that the old one-size-fits-all view was wrong but the new rage of no Government is wrong as well, that we need a Government that can be a partner to our people, to help them to compete and prosper in a global economy which is changing very rapidly and which presents great opportunity but also real challenges as well.

I believe we need a Government that shrinks bureaucracy and increases opportunity, one that empowers people to make the most of their own lives instead of pretending that they can solve people's problems for them, and a Government that enhances security around the world, but here on our streets as well. The key to our future is to, therefore, create more opportunity but also to have all of us, each in our own ways, assume more responsibility. That's what I have called the New Covenant. It's basically an old-fashioned social compact about citizenship, citizenship for the 21st century, that requires us to get rid of yesterday's Government and replace it with a new Government.

A lot of the things that we have to do don't have a necessary partisan tinge to them, and I hope that we can keep this reinventing Government effort a broad-based bipartisan one. In that regard, I thank Congressman Boehlert for